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A SKETCH
OF
THE LIFE OF THE
REV. JOSEPH MONTGOMERY,

BY
JOHN MONTGOMERY FORSTER,

HARRISBURG, PA.
PRINTED FOR PRIVATE DISTRIBUTION.
December, 1879.

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REV. JOSEPH MONTGOMERY.

“JOSEPH MONTGOMERY, son of John and Martha Montgomery, originally from Ireland, was born September 23d, A. D. 1733, O. S.,” is the record contained in an old family Bible in possession of Mr. T. C. Laird, now residing in the State of Nebraska. Where Mr. Montgomery was born is not certainly known. The circumstances of his after-life identify him with Lancaster County, and Paxton, near Harrisburg, but the records in the Register’s office, at Lancaster, prior to the creation of Dauphin county, do not contain the will of any John Montgomery who could have been his father, or letters of administration on his intestate estate. His father unquestionably was a Scotch-Irish Presbyterian, who came to America with the flood of emigrants that poured into Pennsylvania early in the last century, and whose marked characteristics were rigid piety, love of liberty, and desire for the education and advancement of their children.

Mr. Laird says his father believed that the Bible from which the above extract is taken was once the property of the Rev. Joseph Montgomery. This is highly probable, as Samuel Laird married the daughter of Mr. Montgomery, and owned and lived in his house after his death.

His books and papers passed into the possession of the Laird family, and this Bible among them. Samuel Laird was the father of Samuel Laird, who was the father of T. C. Laird, the possessor of the Bible ; so the book passed to its present owner by regular descent, and this record is unquestionably authentic.

At the time of Mr. Montgomery's birth George II was King of Great Britain, and the inhabitants of the Colonies his loyal subjects. The catalogue of the College of New Jersey shows that Joseph Montgomery was graduated there in 1755, one year before the removal of the College to its present location at Princeton, which occurred in the autumn of 1756. The College was located at Newark, New Jersey, before its removal to Princeton, and the Rev. Aaron Burr was the President during the period when Mr. Montgomery was a student. At the time of his graduation he had just completed his twenty-second year, and it may be inferred that he entered the College four years before, when he was just eighteen years of age. Many of those who were his fellow students afterwards became conspicuous in Church and State. —“Of the one “hundred and fourteen graduates,” says Dr. John Maclean in his history of the College, “who, from 1747 to “1757, pursued their studies under the direction of President Burr, more than half became preachers of the “Gospel, and about *forty* were men of more or less note “in their respective callings, and of these not a few were “quite eminent.”

Among these “men of more or less note,” who were students at Newark during the term of Mr. Montgomery's

residence there, and with whom he must have had more or less acquaintance, were :

The Rev. John Ewing, for two years a Tutor in the College, Professor in the University of Pennsylvania, and also Provost of the same. He became Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia ; visited Scotland ; was made D. D. by the University of Edinburgh.

William Shippen, M. D., the first Professor of Anatomy in the University of Pennsylvania.

Samuel Livermore, of New Hampshire, Member of the Continental Congress, and afterwards United States Senator.

Jesse Root, of Connecticut, who became Chief Justice of that State.

Joseph Reed, of New Jersey and Pennsylvania, a general during the Revolution, Military Secretary to General Washington, and President of the Executive Council of Pennsylvania.

Alexander Martin, of North Carolina, afterwards United States Senator.

Isaac Smith, of New Jersey, a member of the House of Representatives of the United States, and a Judge of the Supreme Court of New Jersey.

Joseph Shippen, Secretary of the Province of Pennsylvania.

Stephen Sayre, High Sheriff of London.

There is reason to believe that after taking his degree, Mr. Montgomery was appointed Master of the grammar school connected with the College. The Board of Trus-

tees at their meeting on the 29th of September, 1757, made the following minute :

“ Mr. President Burr in his life-time having set up and
 “ carried on a grammar school in this College, which by
 “ his death will now fail unless proper care be taken for
 “ its support, the Trustees therefore, in consideration of
 “ its importance in general, and in particular to this So-
 “ ciety, do agree to take said school under their imme-
 “ diate direction and government, and do appoint Mr.
 “ Montgomerie to be the master of the said school,” &c.

It is altogether probable that the “ Mr. Montgomerie ” here mentioned was the subject of this sketch. Unfortunately his full name is omitted in the resolution of the Board, but Joseph Montgomery was the only person of the name of Montgomery who graduated at the College prior to the date of this minute, and it is quite reasonable to suppose that the Directors selected an *alumnus* of their own institution as the Master of the Grammar School when they attached it formally to the College. It is not improbable that Mr. Montgomery may have been engaged as a teacher in this school from the time of his graduation, in 1755, until the date of this minute, in 1757, for before the latter date it was evidently a private enterprise “ set up and carried on ” by President Burr. The principal instructor in this school from 1754 to 1756, when he became a Tutor in the College, was John Ewing, who was afterwards, and about the time that that institution conferred the degree of A. M. upon Mr. Montgomery, selected to instruct the philosophical classes in the College of Philadelphia during the absence of the Provost.

In the year 1760 both the College of Philadelphia and Yale College conferred the Masters' degree upon Mr. Montgomery, and this can be accounted for upon no more rational or probable hypothesis than that he was engaged as an instructor of youth between the period of his graduation in 1755 and his entering the ranks of the ministry in 1759 or 1760. This hypothesis is strengthened by the fact that after he became the Pastor of the congregation at New Castle, he manifested a deep interest in the work of educating young men for the Gospel ministry, and laid before the Presbytery an overture on the subject, which was matured into an effective plan for the accomplishment of that important object. At all events the fact is certain that between his graduation in 1755 and the year 1760, his work was such as to merit the simultaneous honor of the degrees conferred upon him by Yale College and the College of Philadelphia, afterwards the University of Pennsylvania.

Mr. Montgomery was licensed to preach by the Presbytery of Philadelphia between the meetings of Synod in 1759 and 1760. Where he pursued his theological studies is not known. If the supposition is correct, that after his graduation at Newark in 1755, he removed with the College to Princeton, and was the Master of the Grammar School under the care of the College, in the year 1757, it is probable that his theological studies were commenced during this period under the direction of the eminent clergymen attached to that institution, and that he maintained himself as an instructor in the primary department of the College.

He was licensed to preach by the Presbytery of Philadelphia between the meetings of Synod in 1759 and 1760. Very soon after he was licensed, as appears from the records of the Presbytery of Lewes, he was requested to come into their bounds. He seems to have preached for some time to the congregation at Georgetown, Kent County, Maryland, before that congregation gave him a call to become their settled Pastor. The records of the extinct Presbytery of Lewes are now in possession of the Presbytery of New Castle, and I am indebted to the Rev. John Crowell, of Odessa, Delaware, for the extracts which follow in the course of this narrative.

“Sessio Undecima.

“BROAD CREEK, *July 26, 1761.*

“A Presbytery *pro re nata*, &c.

“The special occasion of calling this Presbytery *
 “* * * is in consequence of Mr. Joseph Mont-
 “gomery’s release from the Presbytery of Philadelphia,
 “and joining our’s at our own request.

“The said Mr. Joseph Montgomery having been a
 “licensed and regular candidate for the ministry of the
 “Gospel for some time, under the care of the Presbytery
 “of Philadelphia, at the request of this Presbytery, is
 “come into our bounds well recommended by a certificate
 “of his qualifications and conduct; has now put himself
 “under our care, and is cheerfully received. The con-
 “gregation of Georgetown having had repeated opportu-
 “nities of acquaintance with said Mr. Montgomery, and
 “of hearing him preach, do now put in a call for him,

“praying his ordination and settlement among them as
 “their fixed Pastor and Teacher. The Presbytery there-
 “fore do present the said call to him.

“Mr. Montgomery is appointed to open our next by a
 “sermon on I Timothy 3:16 (first and second clauses) as
 “part of trial. Mr. Henry appointed to preach on the
 “occasion of his ordination and settlement; Mr. Miller
 “to give the charge and take the engagement; and for
 “these purposes the Presbytery appoint to meet at George-
 “town the second Wednesday in October next.

“GEORGETOWN, *October 14, 1761.*

“The Presbytery met according to adjournment, *ubi*
 “*post preces sederunt.* Messrs. John Miller, Hugh Henry,
 “Matthew Wilson, Ministers; Andrew Lacky, Elder. The
 “Presbytery was opened by Mr. Montgomery with a ser-
 “mon on I Timothy, 3:16, as appointed at our last.

“This was considered and approved and accepted as
 “part of Presbyterial Tryal. Having also examined him
 “respecting his acquaintance with Divinity, both Polem-
 “ical and Practical, and of his personal religion or his
 “acquaintance with Experimental and Casuistic Divinity,
 “in all he was accepted and approved.

“*October 15, 9 o'clock, A. M.*

“Mr. Henry having preached from Jeremiah, 23:32,
 “and the engagements having been taken by Mr. Miller
 “from Mr. Montgomery and the people, he was solemnly
 “ordained and installed with the congregation at George-
 “town as their settled Pastor, and received as a member

“of this Presbytery. The ordainers were Messrs. John
 “Rodgers, (who had been invited to sit as a correspond-
 “ent,) Hugh Henry, Matthew Wilson, and John Mil-
 “ler.”

The members of the Presbytery of Lewes present at this ordination and installation were all men of mark in the Presbyterian Church. John Miller was a native of Boston. His father was from Scotland. He was licensed to preach the Gospel in 1748, and soon after took charge of the Church at Dover, Delaware. He was twice elected Moderator of the old Synod, then the highest judicatory of the Church. He was an ardent patriot during the Revolution, and died in 1791.

Matthew Wilson was born in Chester County, Pennsylvania, in 1731. He was a physician as well as a minister of the Gospel. He was installed Pastor of the congregation of Lewes and Cool Spring, Delaware, in 1756, and remained in that charge until his death, which occurred in 1790. During the Revolutionary war he was an active Whig. “Some, indeed, thought that he carried
 “his public activity in the Whig cause rather further than
 “became a minister of the Gospel,” says his biographer. His son, Rev. James P. Wilson, D. D., became Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia, and was esteemed a preacher of extraordinary power.

John Rodgers who was one of the ordainers, and who had been invited to sit as a correspondent on this occasion, was a native of Boston, but of Scotch-Irish parentage. He was licensed by the Presbytery of New Castle, in 1747, and installed Pastor of the congregation of St.

George's, Delaware, in 1749. Here he remained until 1765, when he was called to the Church in New York, afterwards known as "Dr. Spring's Church." In 1768 he was honored with the degree of Doctor of Divinity by the University of Edinburgh upon the recommendation of Dr. Franklin, who was then in Lowdon, written at the suggestion of Mr. Whitfield. In 1776 he became Chaplain of General Heath's Brigade. He was also Chaplain of the Convention of the State of New York and the Council of Safety. After the close of the war he became Vice Chancellor of the University of New York, and was Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbytery Church in 1789. He died in May, 1811, in the eighty-fourth year of his age, and the sixty-third of his ministry.

All that is now known of this Georgetown Church and the pastorate of Mr. Montgomery, is contained in the records of the Presbytery. The Rev. E. W. Gaylord, now the Pastor of the Church at Georgetown, in his historical sermon delivered a few years ago says that Mr. Montgomery was the first and only Pastor the old Church ever had. "This pastorate," he continues, "lasted eight years, and during its continuance the Church seems to have been as prosperous as at any period during its history. In 1769 Mr. Montgomery was forced to ask a dismissal on account of non-payment of his salary, and from that time forward for several years the Church was again supplied by Presbytery."

In addition to the above, Mr. Gaylord writes: "Concerning the old Georgetown Church it seems to have been organized, as near as I can get at it, about

“1740, and was supplied by Presbytery, more or less frequently, until the time of Mr. Montgomery’s coming. The earliest records of Presbytery of preaching here are in 1746. The deed for the lot on which the Church stood was given in 1766, but one meeting-house had been built and gone down, and a second was on the ground at the time the deed was given. The Church had no regular Pastor after Mr. Montgomery left it. A call was given to Mr. Daniel Jones in 1771, but not accepted, nor does he seem to have preached statedly for any length of time. From that time until 1809 the Church struggled on often a long time without any preaching, then seems to have given out. The present Georgetown, (Westminster Church,) was organized June 18, 1871.”

While he was Pastor of the Church at Georgetown, Mr. Montgomery was married to Elizabeth Reed, daughter of Andrew Reed, of Trenton, New Jersey. Her mother was Sarah Pearson. There is a stone in the Trenton Church yard marked Sarah, wife of Andrew Reed, March 15, 1739.

It is probable that Mr. Montgomery’s marriage to Elizabeth Reed occurred about the year 1767, as their daughter, Sarah Pettit Montgomery, was born in July, 1768, and it is not known that there was any other issue of this marriage.

The father of Andrew Reed emigrated from Carrickfergus. Dr. Hall’s history of the Presbyterian Church of Trenton, New Jersey, states that Andrew Reed was a merchant, and the first treasurer of the borough of Trenton

upon its incorporation in 1746. He was made a trustee of the Church by the charter of 1756, and served until 1759, when he removed to Amwell, where he died December 16, 1769. He was the father of General Joseph Reed, of the Revolution, who followed him in the trusteeship in 1766. Mr. Andrew Reed resided for some time also in Philadelphia, and was a trustee of the Second Presbyterian Church in that city. According to William B. Reed, in his *Life of General Reed*, Andrew Reed was one of the trustees of the Third Presbyterian, or Arch Street Church. Soon after the birth of his son Joseph, (1741,) he removed to Philadelphia, where he continued to reside until some time after 1752, when he returned with his family to Trenton.

Andrew Reed by his marriage to Sarah Pearson had issue—two daughters—Elizabeth, who married Joseph Montgomery, and Sarah, who married Charles Pettit. Sarah Pearson died in 1739, and Andrew Reed by a second marriage, to Theodosia Bowes, was the father of General Joseph Reed.

The precise date of the marriage of Mr. Montgomery cannot be determined. It occurred at some time during his settlement at Georgetown, when Andrew Reed and his family were residing at Trenton. The sole surviving issue of this marriage, Sarah Pettit Montgomery, was born in July, 1768, and from the name given her it is evident that the marriage of her mother's sister, Sarah Reed, to Charles Pettit occurred prior to the birth of Sarah Pettit Montgomery.

Colonel Charles Pettit lived until the year 1806, and

filled many distinguished public stations. He was a member of the Pennsylvania Assembly. He was appointed Assistant Quarter-Master General to General Greene, in connection with Colonel John Cox. In a letter to General Reed on the 9th of March, 1778, General Green says that nothing could have induced him to accept this post, but the appointment of those two gentlemen as his aids.

The children of Charles and Sarah Pettit were Andrew; a daughter who married Jared Ingersoll, an eminent lawyer of Philadelphia and Attorney General of Pennsylvania, and father, by this marriage, of Charles J. and Joseph R. Ingersoll; and another daughter, Theodosia, who married Alexander Graydon, the author of "Graydon's Memories of His Own Times." Mr. Graydon was an officer during the Revolution, a lively writer, and the first Prothonotary of the County of Dauphin.

As before stated, Sarah Pettit Montgomery was born, most probably at Georgetown, in the year 1768. Her mother, Elizabeth Montgomery, died in March, 1769. In his account of the Rev. Elihu Spencer's connection with the Church at Trenton, Dr. Hall says: "In a Philadelphia newspaper of the day, it is mentioned, that 'Mr. Spencer preached at the funeral of the wife of 'the Rev. Joseph Montgomery, of Kent County, Maryland, March, 1769, in the Presbyterian Church, Georgetown.'"

Mr. Henry Reed, of Philadelphia, has kindly furnished me with the following copy of the notice referred to by Dr. Hall from the Pennsylvania Gazette of March 23, 1769.

“ KENT CO., MARYLAND, *March 14, 1769.*

“ Last Saturday departed this life Mrs. Elizabeth Montgomery, wife of the Rev. Joseph Montgomery, in the “twenty-eighth year of her age. A gentlewoman, who “by her obliging, cheerful, and modest behaviour and “unaffected piety, had rendered herself universally esteemed by all who had the pleasure of an acquaintance “with her. Yesterday she was decently interred at the “Presbyterian Church in Georgetown, where a sermon, “suitable to the occasion, was delivered by the Rev. Elihu Spencer to a great concourse of people.”

There is evidently a mistake here as to her age. This account would place 1741 as the year of her birth, whereas her mother, Sarah Pearson, died in 1739, and her half-brother, General Reed, was born in 1741 by the second marriage of her father. She must have been born as early as 1736 or 1737.

The Rev. Elihu Spencer, who preached the sermon at Mrs. Montgomery's funeral to “a great concourse of “people,” was at this time Pastor of the Church of St. George's, Delaware, from which place he removed in October, 1769, to Trenton, and became Pastor of the church at that place. He died at Trenton, in December, 1784. Mr. Spencer was a Trustee of the College of New Jersey from 1752 until his death. Like all the Presbyterian clergymen of his day, he was warmly and conspicuously engaged on the side of the Colonies during the Revolutionary struggle. In 1775, by direction of Congress, he, in conjunction with Dr. Macwhorter of Newark, went to North Carolina for the purpose of informing the settlers

there and stirring them up in the cause of Independence. His interference was considered rebellion, and the authorities of the royal government offered a reward of a hundred guineas for his head. He was compelled to fly for his life, and secluded himself, with his family, at St. George's, among his old parishioners, until it was safe to return to Trenton. Mr. Spencer's daughter married Jonathan Dickinson Sergeant, and was the mother of Thomas and John Sergeant of Philadelphia, both men of great eminence in the legal profession.

Of Mr. Montgomery's residence at Georgetown little is known. It was probably an uneventful country pastorate. Georgetown must have been a very small village, and the location was not healthy. The only record that throws the faintest light upon this period of his history, is contained in an old mutilated account book, kept by Mr. Montgomery, and recently discovered by Mr. A. B. Hamilton, of Harrisburg, among some old family papers. The first pages of this book have been torn out. The record remaining, opens with June 15, 1768, where the congregation of Georgetown are charged with one year's salary, £120 0 0. Immediately following is a charge of £13 16 8. "To cash paid for making 150 panel of "post and rail fence at 22*d.* per panel." Other charges follow, indicating the rural character of the place. "To "cash paid Geo. Browning for laying a Barn floor, "£1 5 0." Then there is another charge, dated June 15, 1769, "to salary due, £120 0 0," and the sum of the charges for two year's service is £258 9 8. On the opposite side of the account are various items crediting

cash and provisions paid by individuals, in which occur the names of Wallace, Maxwell, Sallisbury, Dollis, Gray, Church, Moody, McCombs, Richison, Vansant, Black, Henry, Woodland, Darrach, and Geddes; names denoting the character of the population. It looks as if the Church had no Treasurer, but individual members paid as they pleased or had engaged. The annual house rent credit is £20; and there is a credit of a like sum received at Philadelphia June 27, 1769, when Mr. Montgomery had severed his connection with this congregation, and was probably on his way to New Castle. The final settlement is entered July 7, 1772, after his settlement at New Castle, when there remained due £53 17 4, which sum appears to have been afterwards paid.

Turning again to the records of the Presbytery of Lewes, this minute is found:

“REHOBOTH, *June*, 22, 1768.

“The Presbytery met according to appointment. Mr. Montgomery on his own application to the Synod, was by them set off to New Castle Presbytery, (with which he united at Fagg’s Manor, August 9, 1768.”)

Mr. Crowell, writes: “No reason is assigned for Mr. M. making the application, nor is anything said concerning his Congregation having been set off with him. But from the minutes of the Presbytery of New Castle, it appears that this was done, and on Mr. Montgomery’s request; because of insufficient means of support, his pastoral relation with Georgetown was dissolved by the Presbytery of New Castle, March 23, 1769, with the

“understanding that he would remain with them until
“June.”

This understanding was faithfully carried out, as he remained at Georgetown, until late in June, 1769. The place had probably become distasteful to him, after the death of his wife. With his infant daughter, he went to New Castle, and this record appears in his account book :
“New Castle, July the 10th, 1769. I entered as a Tenant into Mr. Bedford’s House.”

The following extract is from the records of the Presbytery of New Castle :

“August, 16, 1769.

“The Presbytery met at New Castle, and installed Rev. Joseph Montgomery, Pastor of the Congregations of New Castle and Christiana Bridge, after the form of the Church of Scotland.”

I am under obligations to the Rev. J. B. Spotswood, D. D., Pastor of the Church at New Castle, for a copy of an historical sketch of the Presbyterian Church of that place, delivered on the 10th of May, 1854, to the Congregation in their old church, the day preceding that on which their new church was dedicated. From this discourse, the extracts which follow are taken. It appears that the congregations of New Castle and Christiana Bridge had been vacant for some years preceding the settlement of Mr. Montgomery, because of the difficulty of uniting upon the same person. “At length,” continues Dr. Spotswood, “they united in a call to the Rev. Joseph Montgomery, who was originally a member of the

“Presbytery of Lewees, from which he was transferred
 “to that of New Castle, in 1767, and settled over the
 “Church at Georgetown. That congregation being too
 “feeble to give him an adequate support, he, after labor-
 “ing among them a little more than two years, was in-
 “duced to accept a call from these Churches, over which
 “he was installed April 16, 1769.

“Mr. Montgomery, while Pastor of this Congregation,
 “manifested a deep interest in the all-important work of
 “educating pious young men for the Gospel ministry.
 “He laid before the Presbytery an overture on the sub-
 “ject, which being discussed, was referred to a commit-
 “tee to mature a plan by the next meeting. In the mean
 “time, the overture was distributed through the Churches,
 “‘in order to know their sentiments respecting it.’ In
 “the following year, a plan was agreed upon, and a
 “Presbyterial Education Fund established. According
 “to this plan, each Minister was to contribute one pound,
 “each vacant Congregation two pounds, and all others,
 “any sum convenient. The first student educated by
 “this fund, was Mr. James Wilson, who was taken under
 “the care of the Presbytery in 1773.”

Some time in the autumn of 1769, soon after his set-
 tlement at New Castle, Mr. Montgomery was married to
 Rachel, the widow of Angus Boyce, and sister of Dr. Ben-
 jamin Rush, celebrated as a physician, an active patriot,
 and one of the signers of the Declaration of Independ-
 ence. There remains no record of the date of this mar-
 riage, but from the fact, that the first child, Elizabeth,
 afterwards married to Samuel Laird, was born July 17,

1770, it must have occurred as early as October, 1769, unless there is some mistake in the date of the birth of Elizabeth. According to a pedigree of the Rush family, prepared by Dr. Rush, their ancestor John Rush, was commander of a troop of horse in Cromwell's army, and in 1683, removed with his family to Pennsylvania, and settled in Byberry. Beside Elizabeth, the only issue of this second marriage, was John Montgomery, born December 23, 1771.

This same pedigree of the Rush family, gives John Montgomery, as the only issue of the marriage of Joseph Montgomery and Rachel Rush. The late Henry J. Williams, of Philadelphia, in a letter dated January 23, 1878, in answer to inquiries on this subject, says:

"I find in a Table of the genealogy of Dr. Rush, in his hand-writing, the following entries:

"Thomas and Rachel Rush had issue—James, Rachel, Rebecca, Benjamin, Jacob, Stephenson, and John.
 "Under *Rachel's* name is the following entry: Born at Byberry, A. D. 1741; married Angus Boyce, then Joseph Montgomery. Died October, 1798. Posterity, "one son by each, died young." Mr. Williams notes it as remarkable that Dr. Rush should have omitted his sister's daughter's name, as the genealogy was written after Mrs. Montgomery's death, as it refers to that event as having occurred in 1798. This is remarkable; but there can be no doubt that Mr. Montgomery's first wife died in March, 1769. The Philadelphia newspaper of the day establishes that fact beyond controversy. His second daughter, Elizabeth, was born, according to the record,

July 17, 1770, more than sixteen months after the death of the first wife. This is conclusive as to Elizabeth being the daughter of the second wife, unless, indeed, there is a mistake in the record as to the date of her birth.*

From the fall of 1772 to the spring of 1774, during his residence at New Castle, Mr. Montgomery was the preceptor in Theology of his nephew, Samuel Eusebius McCorkle. According to the life of the latter, (*Sprague's Annals*, Vol. III, p. 346,) he was born on the 23d of August, 1746, near Harris' Ferry, in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, where he passed his earliest years; but when he was about nine removed with his parents to a point some fifteen miles west of Salisbury, North Carolina. He was graduated at the College of New Jersey,

* I have followed the record, but cannot rid myself of the belief that Elizabeth was really the daughter of the first wife. The circumstances which cause serious doubt are these: The Rush genealogy omits her name, and she was at least twenty-eight years of age when it was prepared by Dr. Rush. The Bible in possession of Mr. T. C. Laird contains, first, a record of the birth and death of Joseph Montgomery; then the birth and death of his second wife, Rachel; then immediately follows the birth of John Montgomery, son of Joseph and Rachel Montgomery; then the death of Mrs. Elizabeth Laird and of Samuel Laird. The omission of any record of the birth of Elizabeth before that of John Montgomery is not consistent with the idea that she was the first issue of the second marriage. The entry which fixes her birth 17th July, 1770, is an addition to the record of her marriage; is made in a different hand, and occurs after the record of her death. These circumstances, taken in connection with the impression in the family that Sarah P. and Eliza

in the year 1772, in the same class with the Rev. Dr. McMillan of Western Pennsylvania, and Aaron Burr, and soon after commenced the study of Theology under his maternal uncle, the Rev. Joseph Montgomery. This account throws some light upon Mr. Montgomery's birth-place and family. As Mr. McCorkle was his sister's son, and only thirteen years his junior—Mr. Montgomery having been born in September, 1733, and his nephew in August, 1746—it follows that Mrs. McCorkle was considerably older than Mr. Montgomery; and as she resided near Harris' Ferry, now Harrisburg, in 1746, when her son Samuel was born, and her brother Joseph was but thirteen years of age, it is highly probable that their parents, John and Martha Montgomery, also resided near

both were full sisters, and the continued intimacy of Elizabeth with the Reed family, seem, of themselves, to negative the idea that she was the second wife's daughter.

On the other hand is the inscription on the tombstone of Sarah Pettit Forster, at Erie, that she was born in July, 1768; the Philadelphia newspaper which records her mother's death a few days before March 14, 1769, and the record of Elizabeth's birth, July 17, 1770. If she was the first wife's daughter, she was born before the 14th of March, 1769; and this, in view of the fact that Sarah was born in July, 1768, is improbable if not impossible. To make Elizabeth the first wife's daughter, it is necessary to assume that the record of Sarah's birth, and the record of Elizabeth's birth, are both incorrect. To make her the second wife's daughter, we must grant that Dr. Rush was ignorant of her existence, and that her name was omitted from the family Bible. The difficulties either way are great; but I have thought best to follow the evidence of the positive record in the face of a strong impression to the contrary.

Harris' Ferry, and that Joseph Montgomery and his sister McCorkle were both natives of this place.

In the spring of 1774, Samuel Eusebius McCorkle was licensed to preach the Gospel by the Presbytery of New York, and after spending two years in Virginia, he accepted a call from the congregation of Thyatira, North Carolina, in which his parents resided. Here he remained until his death, which occurred in 1811. In 1776 he was married to Margaret Steele, of Salisbury, North Carolina, who survived until 1821. They had five sons and one daughter, all of whom survived him. Mr. McCorkle was made a D. D. by Dickinson College in 1792; published a number of sermons during his life time, and exercised a great influence in the South during the stormy time of the Revolutionary war.

We now approach the eve of the great struggle of the Colonies for independence. Of the events which preceded and led to the war of the Revolution, we may be sure that Mr. Montgomery was not a quiet or indifferent spectator; and when the storm burst, he and his people were prepared to take part in the momentous conflict. Indeed, with no other evidence than that he was a Presbyterian minister, it might be affirmed with absolute confidence, that his influence was used on the side of the Colonies; for they, almost to a man, espoused the American cause. In his address before the Literary Societies of Dickinson College in June, 1879, Mr. Brewster called the Presbyterian Church "the great Church of our Revolution," and attributes the liberties we now possess mainly to the intellectual training of its clergy, "their united

“fidelity in the cause of their country, and unflinching
“assertion of human rights.”

“It was,” he continues, “the patriotic Church of the
“country. Its members organized the Revolution which
“led to independence. The very form of their Church
“government furnished to us the draft of that which,
“when modified and adapted to public and political pur-
“poses, became the Constitution of this nation.” *

* * “We owe them much, for they infused a
“manly spirit of Christian faith into our early public life
“that never has forsaken us, and which has been the
“greatest element of our national dignity, virtue, and
“prosperity.”

On the 12th of June, 1775, the General Congress made
its first appeal to the people of the United Colonies by
an injunction to them to keep a fast on one and the same
day. A few days after this appeal, on the 17th of June,
the battle occurred at Bunker's Hill. The fast was ob-
served on the 20th of July, succeeding. On that day Mr.
Montgomery preached to his congregations of New Cas-
tle and Christiana Bridge. This sermon was printed the
same year, and I am indebted to Dr. W. H. Egle, of Har-
risburg, for the use of the copy in his possession. It is
entitled

25

A

SERMON

PREACHED AT

CHRISTIANA BRIDGE AND NEW CASTLE,

THE 20TH OF JULY, 1775,

BEING THE DAY APPOINTED BY THE

CONTINENTAL CONGRESS

AS A DAY OF FASTING, HUMILIATION,

AND PRAYER.

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.

By JOSEPH MONTGOMERY, A. M.

Quocirca vivite fortes

Fortiaque adversis opponite Pectora rebus.

Hor. Sat. Lib. 2.

PHILADELPHIA.

Printed by James Humphreys, Junior,
the corner of Black Horse Alley, Front Street.

MDCCLXXV.

The following is the inscription:

To

Samuel Patterson, Esquire,

Colonel;

Gunning Bedford, Esquire;

Major;

Captain Robert Morgan,

Captain Stephen Spencer,

Captain James Dunn,
with the
officers
of their respective companies.

This sermon
preached before them
and now published
at their desire,
is humbly
inscribed
by their sincere friend,
and very humble servant,
the Author.

The Preface states: "The long space of time which
"has intervened between the preaching and publication
"of this sermon, was occasioned by the indisposition of
"the author, which prevented his preparing a copy of it
"for the press. This circumstance, together with a
"sense of its many defects, would have induced the au-
"thor to have suppressed it altogether, but he could not
"do it consistent with the obligations he owes to the
"worthy audience, at whose request he consented to its
"publication."

As the sermon was printed in the year 1775, "the long
space of time" referred to as intervening between its de-
livery and publication, did not exceed five months.

The character of the sermon may be inferred from the
following brief extracts :

"Our enemies are our fellow subjects, our brethren,
"and our kinsmen ; and whilst the laws of nature, and
"the voice of God, conspire to excite us to assert our

“rights and privileges at the risk of our lives and for-
 “tunes, yet it is with the greatest reluctance that we have
 “drawn the sword. It is because we cannot maintain
 “our freedom with any other sacrifice than that of blood.
 “Our breasts, even after a victory over those who are
 “made the instruments of our oppression, are agitated
 “with those contradictory passions that seem to have
 “filled the bosom of King David, when he killed his re-
 “bellious son Absalom. We are almost ready to adopt
 “his plaintive language, and cry out over our slain fel-
 “low-subjects, O our brethren! Our brethren! Our
 “brethren! would to God we had died for you. For
 “however those who are enemies both to Great Britain
 “and the Colonies may have represented us, as disaf-
 “fected to Government and deeply tinctured with repub-
 “lican principles; yet God is our witness, that perhaps,
 “there never was a people more strongly attached to a
 “King than the Americans were to the illustrious house
 “of Hanover. Loyalty glowed in almost every breast.
 “We loved Great Britain, and gloried in her prosperity.
 “We boasted in the name of Englishmen.

“But now the day, the fatal day, contrary to our ar-
 “dent wishes and prayers is come, when connection with
 “the parent State must be dissolved, and unless God ap-
 “pears in a signal way in our behalf, there seems to be
 “nothing left for us but to submit our necks to the yoke,
 “or with the powers and resources which God and na-
 “ture have granted us to stand up in our own defence,
 “resolved to live freemen or die gloriously, leaving the
 “alternative to the Lord God of Hosts.” * *

“ Finally, let us make use of such means as God and
 “ nature have put into our hands for our defence and se-
 “ curity. I would not offer such an insult to your un-
 “ derstandings, as to attempt to prove before you, that a
 “ defensive war is lawful, nor need I mention in this au-
 “ dience, that revolutionary principles justify resistance
 “ against unlawful power. Common sense, and the feel-
 “ ings of mankind, have long since reprobated the absurd
 “ doctrine of passive obedience and non-resistance.

“ Therefore, my subject addresses itself peculiarly to you
 “ who are the chosen Captains of our tribes ; to you who
 “ are the Officers, and military men — prepare — stand
 “ upon your guard — let resolution and courage inflame
 “ your bosoms—for if ever the dogs of war are let loose
 “ in our borders, and the glittering sword is unsheathed
 “ in our streets, then the eyes of our aged fathers, our
 “ ancient matrons, the eyes of our wives, our maidens,
 “ and children, will all look up to you for protection ;
 “ yea, the happiness of thousands yet unborn, may de-
 “ pend upon your conduct. Inlist then under the Lord
 “ God of Hosts, take him for your Captain General, and
 “ go forth in his strength, ‘ keeping the words of his cov-
 “ enant, and doing them, so shall ye prosper in all ye
 “ do.’ ”

It is worthy of notice, that Congress had not then de-
 termined that “ connection with the parent State must
 be dissolved,” as declared in this bold address. The Dec-
 laration of Independence did not occur until the suc-
 ceeding year. The order of Congress appointing the day
 of fasting and prayer, was in a very different tone from

this sermon, and kindred sermons which sounded from Presbyterian pulpits on this memorable day. The order of Congress was pitched in a much lower key. It called upon the people to supplicate the Merciful Dispenser of all events, "to bless our rightful Sovereign, King George the Third," and that America might soon behold the restoration of her invaded rights, and a reconciliation with the parent State, on terms honorable to both.

Mr. Montgomery's residence, while Pastor of these Congregations, was evidently not in the town of New Castle, but in the neighborhood, accessible to both Churches, where he supplemented his pastoral duties, and his salary by farming. July 1, 1773, it cost him two shillings "to a man and horse sent to New Castle, for hinges, &c., for the windows." The account book contains another charge, ten shillings, "to a team one day, hauling boards from New Castle to the plantation," where he appears to have been building a house, from various items for plastering, boards, nails, &c. He was also digging a well, and on the 1st of September, 1773, primed the workmen with a quart of rum, at a cost of one shilling. On the same day, he paid Ned Gray, one pound eight shillings, "to attending on the plasterers." On the 19th of October, of the same year, he paid John Thompson, sixteen pounds, for two oxen. The plantation seems to have yielded more than he consumed, for there are a number of items showing wheat, corn, and other farm products sold. The book also contains marriage records, and terminates abruptly in January, 1776, with a number of leaves torn out. There is, however, a record of April

7, 1777, which is the last remaining. In the fall of this year, Mr. Montgomery resigned his congregation, and entered the army as a chaplain.

Dr. Spotswood in his historical sketch before quoted, in reviewing the part taken by the Presbyterian ministers in the Revolutionary war, says: "Some of them finding their usefulness at home destroyed by the war, left their charges to serve as chaplains in the army, among whom was the Pastor of this Church and congregation." *
* * "It has been said that the labors of Mr. Montgomery were so much interrupted by the war that he resigned his charge and joined the American army in capacity of chaplain. This he did on the 29th day of October, 1777. After the close of the war he removed to the State of Pennsylvania, and impaired health preventing him from preaching, he turned his attention to civil affairs. Such was his popularity that he was elected to represent his district in Congress, and subsequently in the Legislature of the State. We have no means of ascertaining when or where he died. The congregation remained vacant from the resignation of Mr. Montgomery, in 1777, to the settlement of the Rev. Samuel Barr, in 1791, during which time the pulpits were supplied by the Presbytery."

The record of the Presbytery of New Castle reads as follows:

"October 30th, 1777.

"Rev. Joseph Montgomery having applied some considerable time since for his dismissal from the care of

“New Castle and Christiana Bridge, on account of bodily
 “indisposition and the broken state of those places by
 “the enemy, and the congregations being repeatedly noti-
 “fied to offer objections, if such they had, against the
 “dissolution of his relations, but none appearing, the
 “Presbytery do agree to dissolve said pastoral relation,
 “and according it is dissolved.”

Mr. Montgomery was absent at that time, and he does not appear on the records as present afterwards.

Dr. Spotswood is mistaken when he says that “after the close of the war” Mr. Montgomery removed to Pennsylvania. He was residing in Paxton long before the close of the war. After leaving New Castle, which he evidently did in the fall of 1777, it is highly probable that he repaired with his family to Paxton, and attached himself in the capacity of chaplain to the Pennsylvania line. His name appears in connection with Colonel Robert Elder’s battalion in 1780, and all his civil appointments came from the State of Pennsylvania, with which he was afterwards closely identified.

The Provinces of Delaware and Pennsylvania were under one executive head, and were so nearly united that their inhabitants interchangeably took service in one or both.

The next trace we have of Mr. Montgomery is at Sunbury, on the then frontier, from which place he wrote to President Reed on the 2d of April, 1780. President Reed replied on the 8th of April, in which he says: “We
 “feel and thank you for your kind attention to the dis-
 “tressed inhabitants of the frontiers, and hope while you

“stay among them your kind consolations as well as “friendly advice will not be wanting.” William Maclay and Colonel Samuel Hunter were both at Sunbury on the same 2d of April, and wrote letters to President Reed, calling loudly for help against the hostile savages who were killing and taking prisoners, and filling with terror the poor scattered inhabitants of the country.

On the 23d of November, 1780, Joseph Montgomery was elected by the Assembly of Pennsylvania one of the delegates to represent this State in Congress. His associates were Samuel Atlee, George Clymer, Henry Wynkoop, and Thomas Smith, of Bedford, and his name appears at the head of the delegation. On the 21st of November, 1781, he was again elected to serve one year with the same associates. The fact that this honor was conferred upon him three years after emerging from the obscurity of a country pastorate in Delaware, is evidence that his services to the State and the cause of independence were regarded as of the highest value. He was evidently one of the representative men of that period. He took his seat in the Continental Congress as one of the delegates from Pennsylvania at a time when men's minds were filled with the most gloomy forebodings, and the cause of the Colonies was at its lowest ebb.

The journal of Congress for 1781 and 1782 shows that he participated actively in its proceedings. On the 13th of September, 1781, he was appointed on a committee, in conjunction with Mr. Witherspoon and Mr. Sherman, to prepare and report a proclamation for a public thanksgiving throughout the United States. On the 5th of Oc-

tober of the same year he submitted a motion requesting the executive powers of Pennsylvania and Delaware to discharge their militia then in service, taking proper measures to secure their assembling again without delay, if necessary. The motion was declared lost, although six States voted in the affirmative, and only South Carolina in the negative. He was chairman of a committee to "report on the arrangement of the President's house-hold." This referred to the President of Congress. On the 8th of May, 1782, he moved that Col. Otho Williams be promoted to the rank of brigadier in the army of the United States, which was agreed to on the following day. July 15, 1782, "Mr. Montgomery and Mr. Root, the two members sent to the States eastward of Pennsylvania, returned." July 18, "Mr. Montgomery and Mr. Root made a report respecting their mission, which was read." The nature of the mission does not appear on the journal. It was probably of a secret character. He was also chairman of a committee "respecting the hospital department." On September 19th he made a report as chairman of a committee "appointed to confer with the Superintendent of Finance, relative to the drawing bills of exchange for the payment of interest." The journal indicates that he was the most active member of the Pennsylvania delegation during the last year of his service. He is recorded as voting for the last time on the 5th of October, 1782. On the 28th of the same month he took his seat as a member from the county of Lancaster in the Seventh Assembly of the State of Pennsylvania, which convened in Philadelphia on that

day. His name appears at the head of the Lancaster County delegation, and he was elected while serving in Congress.

The following receipts are here introduced :

For £120 specie.

IN COUNCIL,

PHILADELPHIA, *October 12, 1781.*

SIR: Pay to Honorable Joseph Montgomery on his order the sum of one hundred and twenty pounds specie, in part of his pay as a member of Congress for this State, for which he is to account.

WM. MOORE,

Vice President.

To DAVID RITTENHOUSE, Esq.,

Treasurer.

On the back of this order are two receipts, one for £68 6, dated October 13, 1781, and the other for the balance of the order in full, dated October 30, 1781; both signed Joseph Montgomery.

"The State of Pennsylvania, to Joseph Montgomery, Dr.

To representing said State in Congress from the 1st day of October last past to November 21st last, fifty-

two days, @ 30s. per day, £78 0 0

Mileage from Paxton, Lancaster County, to Philadelphia,

in December, 1780, one hundred miles, @ 6d. per mile, 2 10 0

Mileage—visiting my family in March last—going and

coming, two hundred miles, @ 6d. per mile, 5 0 0

Mileage—visiting my family in June last, 5 0 0

Mileage— ditto ditto in September last, 5 0 0

£95 10 0

PHILADELPHIA, *December 1, 1781.*

December 1, 1781.

Received of David Rittenhouse, Treasurer, the above sum of ninety-five pounds ten shillings for Joseph Montgomery, Esq.

For JOSEPH MONTGOMERY.
RICH'D SHERER."

The following appears among the minutes of the Supreme Executive Council of July 5, 1781 :

"The Honorable Joseph Montgomery, member of Congress for this State, presented to the Council the following account for his attendance in Congress, viz :

"Dr. The State of Pennsylvaaia, in account with Joseph Montgomery.

| | |
|--|-----------|
| "For his attendance in Congress from the 8th day of December, 1780, to the 1st instant, two hundred and five days, at 30s. specie, | £307 10 0 |
| Cr. By forty-four days absence, | £66 |
| 1780, December 28, by cash, | 50 |
| 1781, February 21, by do. | 50 |
| | — 166 |

| | |
|--------------------|---------|
| Balance, | £141 10 |
|--------------------|---------|

And thereupon an order was drawn on the Treasurer for the balance of the above account."

These accounts show that Mr. Montgomery's residence was in Paxton, while he served in Congress—that his family were there—and strengthen the probability that he was a native of Paxton, and removed there with his family, after leaving New Castle.

On the 25th of February, 1783, the Assembly elected Joseph Montgomery, William Montgomery, of Northum-

berland, and Moses McClean, of York, Commissioners to compromise the difficulty between the State, and the Connecticut settlers in Wyoming. Joseph Montgomery was chosen chairman of the Commissioners. At this early day, they must have traveled all the way from Philadelphia to Wyoming, on horse-back, through a wilderness infested by hostile savages. On the 15th of April, they arrived at Wilkes-Barre, where they were welcomed by a committee of the settlers, who viewed their coming with high hopes, that in some way they would be confirmed in their possessions. "The highly respectable names of the Montgomery's," says Charles Miner, in his history of Wyoming, "were pledges of honor and fairness, that on the whole inspired confidence, and hope of an honorable adjustment." A spirited correspondence commenced between the Commissioners and the representatives of the conflicting interests. (See Miner's History, p. 318, and Pennsylvania Archives, Vol. X, p. 30.) The Commissioners, in their first answer to the settlers, showed a determination not to abate the paramount claims of Pennsylvania. "It cannot be supposed," said they, "that Pennsylvania will, nor can she consent with her Constitution, by any *ex post facto* law, deprive her citizens of any portion of their property legally obtained." The settlers understood this to mean expulsion from their possessions. The committee of Pennsylvania landholders had no other terms of compromise to propose to the settlers, than that they should promise obedience, and disclaim in writing, all claims to their land, held under title from Connecticut. For these

concessions, certain nominal compensations were offered. The terms proposed were certainly harsh; but the Commissioners represented the sentiment of the Assembly of Pennsylvania, and they had nothing better to offer. "That the Montgomery's," says Miner, whose sympathies were strongly on the side of the Connecticut claimants, "should ever have lent their respected names to proposals so fraught with injustice and contumely, appears at this day incredible. Those gentlemen were superior to the least suspicion of corruption, but their minds were probably too deeply imbued with prejudice against the Connecticut claims and claimants, to leave room for the exercise of their naturally just judgments, and more generous and elevated sentiments." Perhaps so; but there were two sides to the controversy.

The Commissioners, after dividing Wyoming into two townships, and appointing a number of justices of the peace, withdrew on the 24th of April. In August, succeeding, they reported to the Assembly, recommending that a reasonable compensation in land, in the western part of the State, be made to the Connecticut claimants, provided they delivered quiet possession to the rightful owners under Pennsylvania, by the 1st of April following. The Assembly received the report of the Commissioners, and confirmed all that had been done.

This did not settle the difficulty. The Connecticut settlers refused to be evicted. Open war succeeded. The settlers attempted to organize a new State. It is impossible here to give even a faint outline of the bloody conflict which lasted until 1788; but before leaving the sub-

ject, we note that on the 28th of March, 1787, the Assembly of Pennsylvania passed the confirming law, under which Timothy Pickering, Joseph Montgomery, and Peter Muhlenberg, were appointed Commissioners, to sit at Wilkes-Barre, to hear and decide claims. They had a stormy time of it, and being threatened with violence, were compelled to adjourn in the month of August. On the 31st of May, 1787, a letter was read to the Supreme Executive Council, from Joseph Montgomery, praying leave to resign his appointment. His resignation was accepted, and a successor appointed the next day.

Mr. Montgomery's term as a member of the Assembly, from Lancaster county, expired in the fall of 1783. Several years before his last appointment as a Commissioner to hear and determine Connecticut claims, viz: on the 17th of August, 1784, he was elected by the Assembly, one of the Commissioners "to examine the navigation
"of the Susquehanna to the sources of the same, and as-
"certain as near as conveniently may be, where the north-
"ern boundary of this State will fall, particularly whether
"any part of Lake Erie is within the State of Pennsyl-
"vania." The following letter on this subject, appears in the Archives, Vol. X, p. 416 :

" PHILADELPHIA, 22d February, 1785.

SIR: In prosecuting the duties assigned us, as Commissioners appointed to run the Northern boundary of this State, we find it necessary to provide ourselves with a transit instrument which we have bought, price thirty pounds. Please, therefore, to order a draught on the

Treasurer for said sum, as also fifty pounds to be charged to, Sir,

Your most Obedient

And Humble Servant,

JOS. MONTGOMERY.

His Excellency, JOHN DICKINSON, Esq., *in Council.*"

The Assembly, in 1785, created the county of Dauphin, out of a portion of Lancaster—the portion now embracing Dauphin and Lebanon counties—and Joseph Montgomery, was elected Register and Recorder, of the new county. Benjamin Wallace and Robert Harris each petitioned for the appointment, but the Assembly selected Mr. Montgomery, without petition. The minutes of the Executive Council of March 11, 1785, state that "a resolution of the General Assembly, appointing Joseph Montgomery, Esquire, Recorder of Deeds and Register of the probate of Wills, and granting letters of administration in and for the county of Dauphine, was read, and commissions issued accordingly; an order was also taken, that Joseph Montgomery, Esq., be appointed a Justice of the Court of Common Pleas, for the said county." This office he held until his death, which occurred at Harrisburg, October 14, 1794.

This terminates the record of Mr. Montgomery's civil services. To return to his ecclesiastical relations: the records of the Presbytery of New Castle, are as follows:

October 23, 1782.

"Mr. Montgomery, having been chosen a member of Congress, and since a member of the Assembly, for the

“State of Pennsylvania, it was ordered, that Mr. Robt. Smith, write to him respecting his intentions in regard to his ministerial office, and his reasons for declining to officiate in it; and to request that Mr. M. inform us respecting these matters, and let us know whether he is to be considered as a member of this judicature.”

December 24, 1782.

“The order respecting Mr. Montgomery, continued.”

April 22, 1783.

“Mr. Smith reported, that he had written to Mr. Montgomery, but had not yet received his answer.”

October 25, 1784.

“Whereas, Mr. Joseph Montgomery has not, for a series of years, attended the sessions of this Presbytery, and has, so far as appears to us, relinquished his office as a Gospel Minister, it is agreed to discontinue his name in our Records; and that Mr. Robert Smith inform him of this resolution and agreement.”

It is possible that the unsettled state of the country may have prevented Mr. Montgomery communicating with the Presbytery. It appears, however, that he attended the Synod in 1782, when he was associated with Dr. Witherspoon and Dr. Spencer in a committee “to prepare an address to the Minister of France, congratulating him on the birth of a Dauphin, son and heir to the Crown of his royal master; expressing the pleasure the Synod feel on this happy event.” It appears also the Presbytery of New Castle reported to the Synod in

1785 "that, in consequence of Mr. Joseph Montgomery's
 "having informed them, through bodily indisposition, he
 "was incapable of officiating in the ministry, and having
 "also accepted an office under the civil authority, they
 "have left his name out of their records."

Notwithstanding Mr. Montgomery had severed his formal connection with the Church, he afterwards occasionally exercised the functions of a minister of the Gospel. It is said that he was the first clergyman in the town of Harrisburg, and that his first discourse was delivered in the lot on Second Street where the Presbyterian Church was afterwards erected, on a pleasant afternoon in the month of June. The congregation—the entire village—were sheltered by two or three large apple trees and some noble oaks, the primitive growth of the forest.

The following is taken from the records of the Masonic Lodge of Harrisburg:

"December 27, 1791.

"Being the anniversary of St. John, the Evangelist.

"Lodge assembled at the house of Mr. John Elders, in
 "Harrisburg. * * * * * * *

"A Master Mason's Lodge was opened in due form
 "according to the ancient ceremonies, &c., and after
 "some consulting upon the mode of procession the
 "Brethren proceeded in due form of processions to the
 "new Jail to hear Divine Service, when the Rev. Joseph
 "Montgomery, notwithstanding he had long declined the
 "exercise of the pastoral functions, honored the frater-
 "nity with a sermon, full of pertinent observations for
 "the government of our conduct through life, from the

“words of St. Paul: ‘Let all things be done decently
“and in order.’”

After returning to the Lodge room, “agreed that
“Brothers Mitchel, Luther, McNamara, and Wright, be
“a committee to return suitable thanks to the reverend
“gentleman for his particular attention to the body in
“delivering them a sermon, in behalf of themselves and
“the Lodge.”

In the month of June, 1787, Mr. Montgomery patented a tract of land in Paxton Township, Dauphin County, containing two hundred and six and a half acres, adjoining lands of George Shoop, Alexander Wilson, and Stophel Shoop, which was called “Bloomsbury.” This land is about four miles northeast of Harrisburg, near the place now known as Shoop’s Church. Here he resided until the year 1793, when, in April of that year, he sold and conveyed “Bloomsbury” to Christian Walborn, and purchased from the Executors of John Harris a lot of ground, containing about one quarter of an acre, on the corner of Chestnut Street and Raspberry Alley, Harrisburg. Here he resided until his death, on the 14th of October, 1794. This house and lot was afterwards owned and occupied by Samuel Laird and Christian Seiler.

Unfortunately the number of the local newspaper, the “Oracle of Dauphin,” which must have contained a notice of his death and burial, has been cut out from the only file in the possession of the descendants of John Wyeth, the publisher.

Mr. Montgomery made a will the year before his death, whereby he divided his property among his wife and chil-

dren, and provided for the freedom of his two negroes—Thomas and Margaret—immediately after his decease. This will also provided that his wife, Rachel, should have and enjoy the whole of his house and lot in Harrisburg during her life.

Rachel Montgomery survived until the 28th of July, 1798. The following notice is taken from the "Oracle of Dauphin:"

"Mrs. Rachel Montgomery, widow of the late Joseph Montgomery, Esq., died Saturday, July 28, 1798, universally lamented. In her were united those virtues which beautify and adorn the Christian and human nature. She was invariably mild and affable, amiable, and courteous to all. Her communicative and sweet disposition, her benevolent and beneficent heart, led her at least to attempt the character of our blessed Lord."

"She was buried in the church-yard at Harrisburg, on the 29th, at five o'clock, P. M.," says the record referred to in the beginning of this sketch. The church-yard was doubtless the lot given by John Harris, for the use of the inhabitants, in the rear of the present Lutheran Church, from which the dead have since been removed. The fact that she was buried here is strong presumptive evidence that her remains were laid beside those of her husband. No memorial was erected to mark their last resting place; at least none that remained when the bodies were removed to the Cemetery.

The material for this sketch was collected several years ago, and its preparation has been delayed with the hope

of discovering something more definite as to the parentage and birthplace of Mr. Montgomery. The search for the particulars of his life was suggested by a brief biography, written by Dr. W. H. Egle, and published in No. 2, Vol. I, of the "Pennsylvania Magazine." Dr. Egle's article contains a number of errors; but is, in the main, correct. After putting my material together, I concluded to have it printed in order to its preservation, and thinking that it would prove interesting to the numerous descendants of Joseph Montgomery, for whom this publication is mainly intended. And his name is worth preserving. He filled conspicuous and honorable positions both in Church and State, in the most trying period of the early history of this Country. In the Church he was the friend and associate of men like Witherspoon, Rodgers, and Spencer, and his bold utterances in the cause of independence stamp him as a man of no ordinary courage and decision. In the State he was twice selected to represent Pennsylvania in the Continental Congress. He represented Lancaster County in the Legislature, and was repeatedly commissioned to execute the most important and delicate duties. Although his health was evidently not robust, we find him at one time at Sunbury alleviating the miseries of the distressed inhabitants; again making repeated journeys from Philadelphia to Paxton; again journeying, by direction of Congress, to the States east of Pennsylvania; again, on two occasions, journeying through the wilderness to Wyoming, on the business of the dispute with the Connecticut Settlers; and how many unrecorded journeys he made in the public interest dur-

ing the Revolutionary war can only be conjectured. He evidently enjoyed, to an unusual degree, the respect and confidence of the men of his generation.

JOSEPH MONTGOMERY had three children, SARAH PETTIT, ELIZABETH, and JOHN.

THOMAS FORSTER was married to SARAH P. MONTGOMERY on the 5th of October, 1786. THOMAS FORSTER was born in Paxton, May 16, 1762, and died at Erie, Pennsylvania, June 29, 1836. SARAH P. MONTGOMERY was born at Georgetown, Kent County, Maryland, July, 1768, and died at Erie, July 27, 1808. They had issue—

Elizabeth Rachel, born in Paxton, July 25, 1787. Married Major James E. Heron. Died at Syracuse, New York, about 1852. Major Heron died at Syracuse in 1861 or 1862. No surviving issue.

John Montgomery, born in Paxton, June 21, 1789. Died at Harrisburg, September 21, 1858. Married Jennette Wright, and had issue, four sons, Thomas, James, Weidman, and John Montgomery, the last two of whom are now, (December, 1879,) living. Widow living in the eighty-ninth year of her age.

Catharine Ann, born in Paxton, June 10, 1791. Married Richard T. Timberlake, Purser, United States Navy, February 6, 1816. He died October 2, 1816. She afterwards married Captain Bailey, and had issue, a son, Theodore, who died young; and daughter, Sarah, who married Mr. Rathbone, of Elmira, New York, where she is now living. Catharine Ann died at Erie, December 17, 1839.

Mary Theodosia, born in Harrisburg, August 16, 1793. Married John Harris, and died about 1820, without issue. Colonel Harris died in Washington a few years ago, Commandant of the Marine Corps.

Joseph Montgomery, born in Harrisburg, March 21, 1795, and died the same year.

Thomas, born at Harrisburg, September 13, 1796. Died at Westfield, New York, October 17, 1864. Married Julia Bell, and had issue, sons, Harris, Sumner, and William; daughters Sarah and Anna, now living.

Sarah, born at Harrisburg, November 24, 1797. Died in Erie County, in 1879.

Eleanor Reed, born at Harrisburg, August 20, 1799. Died at Erie, August 5, 1801.

Samuel Laird, born at Erie, August 8, 1801. Died in Erie about 1860. Married ——— Baird, and had issue.

Hannah Wickersham, born at Erie, January 31, 1804. Married Edwin V. Sumner, of the United States army, who became a Major General and Corps Commander in the Army of the Potomac. He died at Syracuse, New York, during the war. Surviving issue: Nancy Jenkins, widow of an officer who died in Mexico; Margaret, married to Eugene McLain, Colonel in Confederate army; Sarah, married to Mr. Teall, of Syracuse, New York; Mary, married to Armisted Long, who was Chief of Artillery on General Lee's Staff, (she is now Postmistress at Charlottesville, Virginia;) Edwin V. and Samuel, both Majors in the United States army. Mrs. Sumner is now living at Syracuse, New York, and is the last survivor of the family of Thomas and Sarah P. Forster.

Margaret Wallace, born at Erie, September 10, 1806. Married George Wright, of the United States army, who became a General, and had command of the Department of the Pacific during the war. Both lost on a steamer going from San Francisco to Portland, Oregon. Had issue: Thomas F., killed in the Modoc war; John M., now living at Louisville, Kentucky, and is or was Adjutant General of that State; and Eliza, married to Captain Owens, now a widow residing in Washington.

THOMAS FORSTER, the father of this family, was a surveyor. He

was Colonel of the Second Pennsylvania regiment of Volunteers, which was ordered into service by President Washington during the "whiskey insurrection." About 1796 he removed from Harrisburg to Erie, Pennsylvania, as the agent of the Presque Isle Land Company. He was appointed by President John Adams collector of the port of Erie, and received successive commissions from Presidents Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, J. Q. Adams, and Jackson. He filled this office until his death in 1836.

ELIZABETH, the second daughter of Joseph Montgomery married SAMUEL LAIRD, April 22, 1796. Mr. Laird lived at Harrisburg, was a very successful lawyer and an amiable and hospitable gentleman. Elizabeth died October 12, 1814, aged forty-four years, and Samuel Laird died January 15, 1815, aged forty-six years. They had issue—

Samuel, born about 1796. After his father's death was reared by his aunt, Mrs. Mary Harris, of Northumberland County. He married ——— Clingan. Moved to Illinois in 1849, and died in 1869. Had issue, one daughter, Mary, and five sons, Thomas, William, Robert, James, and Paschal.

Forster, born about 1798. Time of his death not known. He married, and his widow and some of his children are supposed to be living.

JOHN MONTGOMERY, only son of Joseph Montgomery, was born December 23, 1771. He was one of the executors of his father's will, and Postmaster of Harrisburg from 1791 to 1793. The last trace of him is a receipt, dated December 8, 1798, to Samuel Laird, for £150, in full for one third of his late father's house.